

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

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President's Perspective

Is your PTA making a difference in your school?

January is a time to set new goals or resolutions. Does your PTA already have goals, do they need to be revised or do new goals need to be made? First you need to evaluate what you are doing and why. Are your programs helping students, are they improving academic or social achievements, are they improving family involvement? If so, how can you expand your programs. If not, what needs to be changed.

Take a moment with your PTA members to see if you are meeting the needs of your school. It is also a great time to re-evaluate your budget. Award applications are due shortly. Apply so that Wisconsin PTA can help you celebrate your success and so that we can share with others in the state.

One resolution I hope you all include is advocacy. There is a lot of advocacy effort needed to keep our schools in Wisconsin

great. A lot of changes are in the future with education with the common core standards, the eventual reauthorization of ESEA and the waivers on the federal level, new school and teacher accountability systems, PBIS and Rtl, budget issues among some of the changes within Wisconsin. Parents need to be heard. Even if you have never spoken before, please add your voice to ours to encourage our legislators and leaders to make education in Wisconsin a priority.

It is also a great time to ask new people to join your PTA. Increase the number of members supporting children in Wisconsin. Share with your community your successes and challenges and ask them to join your efforts. PTA members are not limited to the parents in your school. The whole community has an interest in the outcome of your school so ask them to get involved. Reach out to business and community leaders, community members without kids (they often have time to volunteer), parents and families that have not previously been



involved, past PTA members. I often think that it is interesting that my local school never asks me to join their PTA. (But I do get asked frequently when I am visiting other schools throughout the state.) But remember to make it meaningful to your members. Always remember to evaluate your PTA's efforts with the question: Is your PTA making a difference in your school?

Creating waves of change,

Kim Henderson

President,
Wisconsin PTA



To receive
Legislative
Alerts
send your
email address
to:

[wi_office@
pta.org](mailto:wi_office@pta.org)

Just
Ask!



Legislatively Speaking

James Howard, WI PTA BOD, Federal Legislative Chair

Ten years after President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left behind (NCLB) Act into law, NCLB is now overdue for reauthorization in Congress. Bipartisan in its origins but controversial in its execution,

NCLB, which is the latest version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), expanded the federal role in education and targeted improving the achievement of disadvantaged students. House Republicans released a pair of bills recently that would go furthest of any proposal yet in dismantling federal accountability at the heart of the decade-old NCLB Act. The proposal would squelch the federal role in intervening in schools that miss achievement targets, require teacher evaluations, and give districts significant new funding flexibility. Exactly what is meant by new funding flexibility is unclear. This is the third major

proposal for revising the NCLB law, the current version of the ESEA Act. The others include a

bipartisan ESEA renewal bill that passed out of the Senate last year, and the Obama administration's plan to grant

state waivers from key parts of the NCLB law. Unlike the Senate bill, the House version is a republican only bill.

The Obama administration will waive cornerstone requirements of the NCLB Act, including the 2014 deadline for all students to be proficient in math and reading/language arts, and will give states the freedom to set their own student achievement goals and design their own interventions for failing schools. In exchange for that flexibility, the administration will require states to adopt standards for college and career readiness, focus improvements efforts on 15 percent

of the most troubled schools, and create guidelines for teacher evaluations based in part on student performance. Wisconsin has already brought forward recommendations from a task force which included Wisconsin PTA President, Kim Henderson led by Governor Scott Walker and State Superintendent Tony Evers that could help Wisconsin secure a state waiver for some provisions in the NCLB Act.

In the debate over the future of the NCLB Act, policymakers, educators, and researchers seem to agree on one thing: The Federal Law's accountability system should be rewritten so it rewards or sanctions schools on the basis of student's academic growth and not on unrealistic rigid targets. The current method overlooks schools whose students are showing growth toward proficiency, and sometimes fails to single out high-achieving schools in which a significant proportion of students aren't making progress.

Do You Know the Meaning of SEPTA?

Laura Weaver, WI PTA BOD Health & Welfare Chair

Special
Education
Parent -
Teacher
Association

or SEPTAs are PTAs for parents and teachers who have or are involved with special needs children or children with an IEP (Individual Education Plan).

Parents that have special needs children sometimes have additional needs that an average PTA doesn't fulfill. Although it is the core goal of all PTAs to help *all* children get the best education, families with special needs have other questions and challenges. Many need assistance navigating the education system, help with IEP's, medical questions, where to find com-

munity resources, or comfort in knowing that they are not alone. Currently, there aren't any SEPTAs in Wisconsin.

If you would like more information or are interested in creating a SEPTA in your area, contact Laura Weaver at (414) 545-4094 or tenfuture70@yahoo.com.

Evers to Assembly: Keep Promise, Close Voucher Loophole

Patrick Gasper, DPI Communications Officer

MADISON — State Superintendent Tony Evers today called on Assembly Republicans to take up legislation that would close the voucher school expansion loophole created in the 2011-13 state budget.

“While the stated intention of 2011 Wisconsin Act 32, the biennial budget act, was to include only the Racine Unified School District in school voucher expansion, the budget language has unintended consequences. The law would allow voucher programs in several school districts beyond Milwaukee and Racine without legislative oversight or community input. Several legislators promised corrective action during budget negotiations. Senator Ellis said of voucher expansion in the budget, ‘Nobody agrees with the language that was inserted in there.’ Senator Olsen stated, ‘Our goal was to expand into Racine and that was it.’ Representative Vos said he would co-sponsor legislation to limit the voucher expansion to Racine,

because that was the agreement by Republican lawmakers and leadership.

“Senator Ellis and Representative Vos have both introduced bills to correct the voucher expansion loophole, making vouchers available in only the two communities that currently qualify: Milwaukee and Racine. Both Senate Bill 174 and Assembly Bill 314 received unanimous support in public hearings last fall, and both the Senate and Assembly education committees have recommended passage of the bills.

“The Senate has passed its bill and sent it to the Assembly. Both the Assembly and Senate bills are in the Assembly Rules Committee and available for scheduling on the Assembly floor. I urge Assembly Republicans to vote on both SB 174 and AB 314 during next week’s legislative session. As Representative Vos said during budget negotiations in June, ‘a deal is a deal.’ Both bills will fix the unintentional consequences of language in the 2011-13

state budget. In testimony in support of his bill, Representative Vos said ‘This cleanup will allow for continued discussion on the expansion of school choice in Wisconsin to other school districts through legislative oversight and approval on a case by case basis.’ statement on closing voucher expansion

“I commend Senators Ellis, Cowles, Fitzgerald, Olsen, Jauch, Cullen, Taylor, Schultz, Lassa, Hanson, and Wirch for keeping their promises and passing the bill through the Senate to fix the voucher expansion loophole. I stand ready to work with the Assembly co-sponsors — Representatives Vos, Kestell, Brooks, Krug, Endsley, and Marklein — to advance this legislation so that Governor Walker can sign it into law, as he said through his spokesperson he would do.”

This statement is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2012_10.pdf.

“...bills to correct the voucher expansion loophole, making vouchers available in only the two communities that currently qualify...”

Grants Available

The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), a national organization that has pioneered family literacy programs, is dispersing three grants intended to support teachers’ and literacy programs’ parent engagement efforts in their schools and communities. The



deadlines for both grant applications are in the first week of February.

The Toyota Family Literacy Teacher of the Year Award and the Libraries and Family Award will be given to one U.S.-based teacher and three library literacy programs that

National Center for Family Literacy

have strong practices in family learning and parent engagement. The awards will include grants of \$20,000 and \$10,000 and scholarships to the National Conference on Family Literacy in 2012 and 2013.

For more information visit <http://www.familit.org/award-grant-opportunities/>

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West Allis

Lifetouch National School Studios
Madison

School-Pak, Inc.
Milwaukee

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Madison

Becker's Super Valu Inc.
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Copenhaver Photography
David Thuli Financial Advisor

Mark R. Crego, DDS
Wauwatosa

Phase II Clothing & Skateboards, Inc.
Brookfield

WA-WM Recreation Dept.
West Allis

Wisconsin Retired Educators' Association
Middleton

World of Wheels Skate Center
Superior

NPTA Launches Campaign: Our Home - Our Legacy - Our Future

Campaign will preserve PTA's history of achievement, help organization move forward.

Members invited to give and be recognized

A message from Betsy Landers, National PTA President: National PTA's Our Home-Our Legacy-Our Future campaign is an important milestone in PTA's history. By participating in this campaign, either personally, as a family or even collectively as a PTA unit, you can help preserve PTA's important history of accomplishments and forever memorialize

your PTA legacy and involvement. There are multiple opportunities to get involved, including designation as a Founding Supporter with just a \$25 contribution. Our new home provides a wonderful backdrop for a donor wall, engraved plaques, and other prominent recognition opportunities such as naming rights for certain areas of the building. As a supporter, your name will be permanently listed at our national headquarters.

In addition to providing quality programs and service to all PTAs, our new headquarters make it possible for National PTA to host leadership and training events, have gallery space to display our

amazing Reflections art work, and an exhibit area that showcases PTA's remarkable accomplishments for visitors and special guests.

Through your support of the campaign, you will be commemorating your legacy with PTA and ensuring a brighter future for generations of children. Thank you in advance for your generosity.



Betsy Landers
National PTA President

AWSA Challenges

Ronald C. Dunlap, WI PTA BOD AWSA Liaison and CREATE Coordinator

Wisconsin school district administrators are being confronted with a number of challenges this academic year due to budget cuts. Our districts need to address the issues of stagnant or growing achievement gap between students of color and white students, graduation and dropout rates and disproportionality in special education.

AWSA wishes express its appreciation to PTA for participating as judging panelists to determine Principal of the Year Awards. Applications were due on January 20, 2012. Winners will be announced in early March.

Maintaining strong leadership is vital for the future of our schools. We are presently working on the Aspiring Administrators work-

shops, encouraging successful teacher leaders to become principals. These workshops will be held in Madison and Appleton in April. AWSA will also host an Aspiring Superintendent Program for principals who are interested in being considered for the superintendent position. The day long workshop, co-sponsored by WASDA, will take place in March.

AWSA has the Center for New School Leaders principals and administrators in their first year of administration. February 7, we will conduct an online meeting to address the various legislative issues and an all day workshop to further assist them. Other online tools are being provided to provide technical assistance to the membership. It also allows AWSA members to share information,

best practices and other resources. Our organization is very excited about this platform.

In February AWSA will holding its annual grade level conferences on middle and high schools in Madison on the 1st-3rd. Elkhart Lake will host the elementary principals on the 8th-10th.

The CREATE Wisconsin initiative wishes to thank the PTA for sharing our monthly newsletter with its board members. You are encouraged to subscribe to this monthly (free) digital publication that serves as a resource to administrators, teachers, parents, and community. www.createwisconsin.net

On behalf of AWSA and CREATE, Happy New Year to you all.

Highlights are Shining in Region C

Robyn Grover & Laura Dykstra—Madison PTA, Wauwatosa: In November we launched a Health and Wellness campaign. PTA provided information about exercise and healthy eating, inexpensive family activities, nutrition guidelines, healthy grocery shopping tips and healthy snack and dinner recipes. We also provide healthy snacks for Madison students on two days.

Sarah Lerand—McKinley PTA, Wauwatosa: McKinley Elementary PTA formed a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) committee during the 2010-11 school year. The primary goal is to create safer routes for walking and biking, we're also looking at the related benefits of enhancing the health of our kids and improving the environment. Efforts have focused on a comprehensive approach, involving parents, the City, Police, School District, crossing guards, local businesses and an array of organizations committed to these safety efforts, including the Wisconsin Safe Routes to School organization, Safe Kids, and the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin. Our successful progress has included these initiatives:

Extensive data collection of accident and traffic violation history in our area where we learned that of 100 incidents over 3 years during the school day, almost 90% occur during student travel times. We placed speed trailers along streets tracking speeds as high as 60 mph during the school day.

Parent surveys to assess the numbers of students who walk to school (fewer than 50%) and to analyze comments, concerns and suggestions. Monthly "hands up" tally's in the classroom record the number of students who walk to school. Education and awareness activities that include monthly school newsletter articles, monthly tallies of how many kids walk to school, presence at school functions, and an annual Walk to School Day event. A Crossing Guard Ambassador program where parent volunteers work with each of the four crossing guards to establish a partnering relationship dedicated to process improvements.

A Walking School Bus (WSB) program was established. Currently, four WSBs, with parent volunteers formally lead small groups of students to school, enhancing visibility to drivers. Amy Standal, PTA co-president and Sarah Lerand, SRTS chair attended a conference on program development hosted by the Wisconsin DOT in December.

The National Center for Safe Routes to School awarded McKinley 1 of 26 grants of \$1,000 to support projects encouraging students and their families to walk or bicycle safely to school. The grant becomes available during the Spring 2012 semester. McKinley intends to expand its WSB program by reaching out to community members, businesses and three nearby universities. WSB encourages parents who have been driving their children to school to form groups that walk together with volunteer adults accompanying them. The program reduces traffic congestion around schools, increases safety and a sense of well-being for parents reluctant to send their children out alone. The grant will pay for recruitment efforts including advertising and digital marketing strategies to connect with college students who would assist in leading McKinley WSBs. Training sessions and background checks will be required of all volunteers. As a core group of volunteers is trained, additional WSB routes will be added. In addition, McKinley staff will develop a "Wauwatosa Walking School Bus Handbook" which will be available to other elementary schools in the Wauwatosa School District. The collaborative efforts of the group have been recognized by the Wauwatosa School District and City of Wauwatosa.



Renee Mrzyglod—MacArthur PTA, Germantown: MacArthur Elementary has been focusing our efforts on programs that do not require cash donations from families. To be considerate of the economic stress of families at this time, we've been raising awareness of programs such as Target's Take Charge of Education, Box Tops for Education and Scrip. We provided Target brochures at fall open house and last spring's carnival and were able to almost double our Red Card holders.

Box Tops coordinator and VP, Kris Sapinski, put together two contests this year. Setting a goal of \$2500 for the students this year she told them when we reached this we could buy a smartboard. Kris made a thermometer, displayed at the entrance that rises as we get closer to our goal. Our principal has been very supportive of this program, sending out announcements to families about promotions at grocery stores for Bonus Box Tops and providing Box Top contest sheets online. Students have a lot of fun with the Box Tops contests and promote teamwork within the classrooms!

Jennifer Owen—Franklin PTA, Manitowoc: Reports they're having a wonderful year! In November we had a fundraiser and record-setting Scholastic Book Fair the proceeds used to grant teacher wishes, award books to students and build the school book room with multiple copies of leveled readers and nonfiction works. Finally, we had near record attendance at our first family night of the year. We showed the movie Cars II and served a hot dog dinner and popcorn to a packed gym. December saw the collection of over 2200 non-perishable food items for a local pantry, adopt 5 families for Christmas and have a bake sale allowing us to make and donate over 50 fleece blankets to local charities! Our school has approximately 375 students, many of whom are finding themselves challenged economically, but are still willing to help others. Franklin Families and PTA are great!

PTA Founders Day

Roxanne Starks, WI PTA BOD Immediate Past President

It can be said that if you have no idea where you came from, you can't know where you are going. The question for all of us is what is Founders Day? The answer to this is the beginning of our rich PTA legacy, February 17, 1897.



Mrs. Birney had appealed "to all mankind and to all womankind, regardless of race, color, or condition, to recognize that the republic's greatest work is to save the children." But in many

and accomplishments the PTA has for over 115 years.

The Vision of the PTA is making every child's potential a reality. June 7, 1910 and Founders Day (February 17, 1897, National PTA) serve as reminders of the substantial role that PTA has played locally, statewide and nationally in supporting parent and family involvement and working on behalf of all children and families. It is the time to reflect and take pride in our many accomplishments, and to renew our commitment to be:

A powerful voice for all children

A relevant resources for parents, and

A strong advocate for public education

Many of the same issues that were concerns in the beginning remain key issues today. The faces may change, but ultimately the role of being an advocate, as our founders were, are more important as we speak for every child with one voice, today, tomorrow and the future.

states segregated schools were legally sanctioned. To address those students' special needs, Selena Sloan Butler founded the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers in 1926. The two PTAs formally merged in 1970.

PTA was founded in 1897 in Washington D.C., as the National Congress of Mothers by Alice McLellan Birney and Phoebe Apperson Hearst. This event brought together 2000 people from across the nation.

Our own history in Wisconsin began in 1910. Wisconsin PTA celebrated 100 years of advocacy on June 7, 2010. The association was founded by Agnes Betts of the Milwaukee/Waukesha area. The first Wisconsin PTA president was Mrs. R. J. Sullivan of Milwaukee.

From the first meeting of the National Congress of Mothers grew a groundswell of support. Problems were identified and strategies devised to resolve them. Through consistent hard work, sometimes after decades of perseverance, the dreams became reality, child labor laws, and a public health service, hot lunch programs a juvenile justice system and mandatory immunization were accepted as national norms.

Across the state, many local units and councils have some type of Founder's Day celebration. Take this time to get your PTAs educated along with your communities on the rich history

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Stebnitz Builders
Delavan

Lake Country Pizza
Turtle Lane

Thank you
for
your
Support!

STEP Student Tools for Emergency Planning

Fifth grade students across the state of Wisconsin are learning to be ready for disasters and emergencies through a new program.

STEP (Student Tools for Emergency Planning) is designed to teach students how to prepare for various emergencies including tornadoes, flooding and storms and encourages them to share the information with their

families and to develop their own family emergency plan.

Wisconsin was the first state in the Midwest to launch the STEP program during the 2010-11 school year. It was an overwhelming success. The program was developed by teachers for teachers and is offered to schools at no cost. Over 5500 students in 100 schools around the state will

take part in STEP during the 2011-12 school year.

STEP is sponsored by Wisconsin Emergency Management; the Department of Public Instruction; the Office of Justice Assistance; the Center for School, Youth and Citizen Preparedness and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Jefferson Elementary Receives Grant

Betsy Landers, National PTA President

In a message from Betsy Landers, national PTA President, we received very good news for a West Allis PTA: "...I am delighted to share with you the winners of the National PTA Take Your Family to School Week Grant. This year, 45 PTAs will receive up to \$1,000 each to implement programs that expand and enhance family engagement in schools across the

country. Each grantee was asked to develop their programs based on PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. Additionally, each PTA will implement their activities during Take Your Family to School Week, February 12-18, 2012..."

Jefferson's Take Your Family to School Week Grant Recipient Pro-

ject Summary: A family breakfast event will kick off Take Your Family to School Week at Jefferson Elementary School. Families will participate in learning activities during the meal and will then walk their children to class. After school, There will be a spaghetti dinner hosted by the local Boy Scout Troop and families will participate in learning activities with their children.



Have you ever thought about attending the PTA Convention but something "better" came along on the calendar?

Have you ever attended a really great event at a school and asked yourself "I wonder where they came up with that idea?"

Well, these questions and many more can be answered by simply attending PTA'S 103rd Annual Convention!! Here are a few ways that Convention can help you!

...participate in informative workshops ...share ideas with PTA members from around the state

...find new fundraising ideas

...attend the Reflections lunch and see kids from around the state accept their award

...meet the Wisconsin PTA Board ...get helpful tips on how to make your board run smoothly

...find ways to increase your PTA membership ...have fun! ...gain great ideas, contacts and new friends!

...help raise money for healthy programs in our schools by joining us in our Walk for Healthy Kids

Most of all, relax, have fun and learn with fellow PTA members from around the state who are doing the same thing!





everychild.one voice

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Reminder to PTAs:
Update Board Rosters
with all:
**Additions, Deletions
or Changes**
throughout the year!



WI PTA Calendar

SAVE THE DATE!

February_ Watch for your Convention Mailing Soon!

- 12-18 Take Your Family to School Week
- 17 PTA Founders Day
- 20 President's Day

March

- 1 Award forms due to WI PTA office

April

- 26 WI PTA Board of Directors Meeting, Lake Geneva
- 27-28 WI PTA Annual Convention, Lake Geneva



Wisconsin PTA Convention
April 27-28, 2011
The Abbey
Lake Geneva, WI